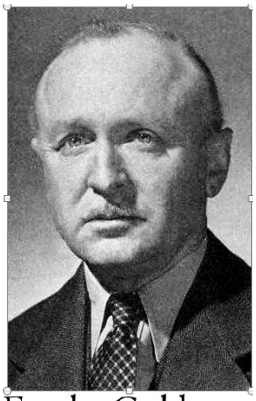
FRANK GOLDMAN WAS A ROCK-STAR

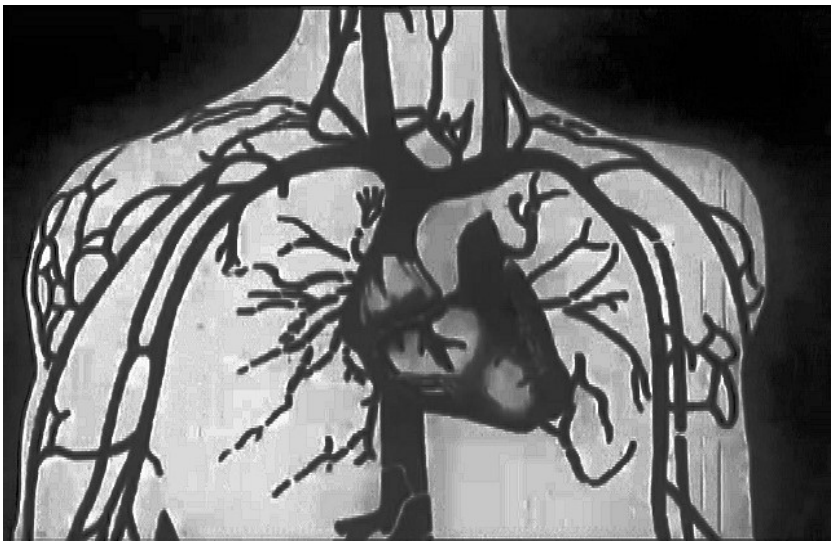
by Bob Coar

Max Fleischer must be remembered as a mechanical genius. By the time he'd joined Bray Studios in 1916 Max had already designed and constructed a rotoscope. During the First World War he and Jacob Leventhal collaborated on advancing technical animation at Fort Sill in Oklahoma. Near the end of 1918 Fleischer and Leventhal returned to Bray Studios in New York. Whether Leventhal's cousin Frank Goldman was already with Bray when they got back, or if he showed up soon after is unclear. He was there in March of 1919 animating on the scientific short film *COMETS* as F. Lyle Goldman.

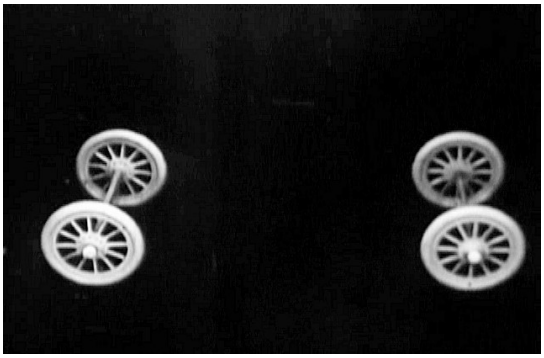

Frank Goldman

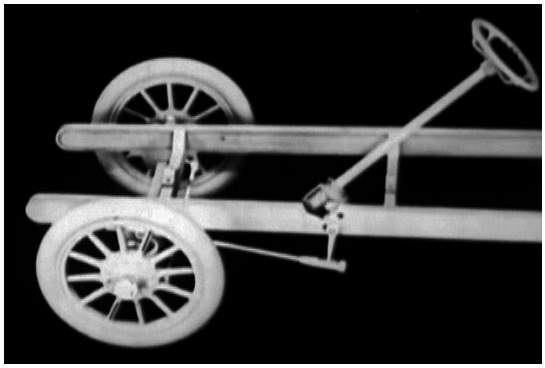
Frank Goldman was born August 9, 1893 in St. Louis, Missouri and trained as an architect before following his cousin Jacob Leventhal to Bray Studios, where he made himself more than useful. Most of the New York animators, Paul Terry, Bill Nolan, the lot of them, focused on the entertainment aspect. Max Fleischer and Jacob Leventhal were deeply involved in technical animation for educational and training films. They worked directly with the government and private corporations on ushering in a wider understanding and acceptance of scientific advancements. Frank Goldman was right beside them.

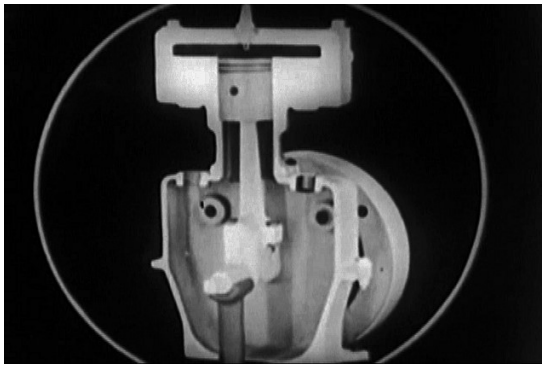
Goldman excelled at representing biological functions of the human body. Max Fleisher came to rely on him.



Mechanical devices were also part of Goldman's routine, and he used stop-motion to demonstrate the nuts-and-bolts of automobile engineering.





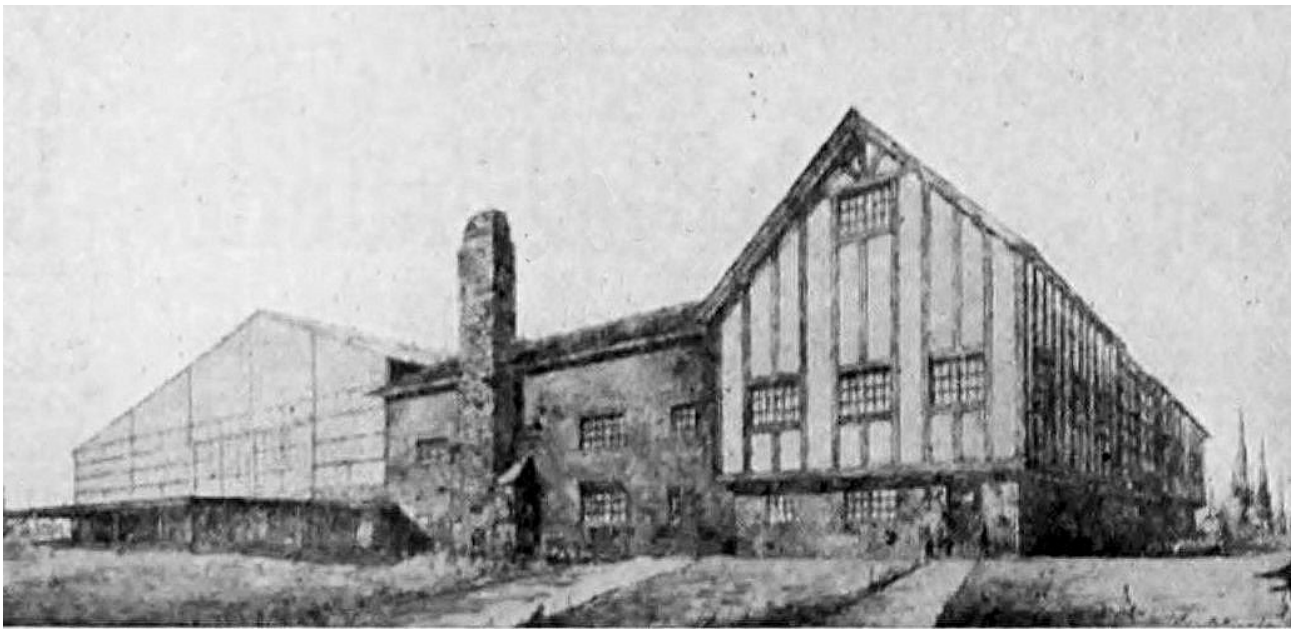


All went well at Bray Studios until 1920 when Sam Goldwyn bought an interest and upset the applecart. Max Fleischer's renaissance *clique* got restless. In May of 1920 **a** Frank Goldman is named as v.p. of Yellowstone Productions, soon to open at a converted skating pavilion in Denver, Colorado. Yellowstone was installing a modern film lab, and that would have appealed to ***our*** Frank Goldman. He's not named in subsequent Yellowstone articles.

Arthur Carpenter

In March of 1921 Bray Studios had "young scientist" Arthur Carpenter arrange microscopic film of insects for an educational short. This guy had wide-ranging credentials. Arthur Carpenter had been an officer in the Army's Chemical Warfare Service, then a photographer for the Massachusetts State Psychopathic Hospital, and a participant in the excavation of Mayan ruins for Harvard University. Currently, he managed production of color film processing for Prizma.

Bray Studios began losing top personnel in May when Max Fleischer and Jacob Leventhal went off to start Out of the Inkwell Productions. November of 1922 saw the incorporation of Carpenter-Goldman Laboratories. Arthur and Frank combined forces to perfect a color process that could be applied to scientific films and animation. A company called Associated Screen News had taken over the old Gaumont studio in Flushing, Queens. Carpenter-Goldman Labs became tenants there in February of 1923.



To pay the bills they processed film stock. In 1924 Carpenter-Goldman stop-motion animated *GETTING TOGETHER*, a film for AT&T where a telephone assembles itself. AT&T was then affiliated with Western Electric, a company very much involved in the race to perfect a system for putting sound on movies. Max Fleischer was deeply immersed in the same quest through Red Seal Pictures, while Jacob Leventhal sought a viable 3-D system. Both Carpenter and Goldman were members of the SMPE (Society of Motion Picture Engineers). They also sat on a committee to promote films as a learning tool, headed by producer William Fox.

All these activities brought Joseph W. Coffman into the fold, sharing their interest in film as an educational medium. Joe Coffman had experience in commercial film as manager of an Atlanta, Georgia studio, and as Supervisor of Visual Education in Georgia and Alabama

schools. Coffman made his way to New York and joined SMPE. Arthur Carpenter, not one to gather moss, spent considerable time in the field doing research and photography. Around 1925 Frank Goldman brought Joe Coffman aboard to help with the workload.

Joseph Coffman

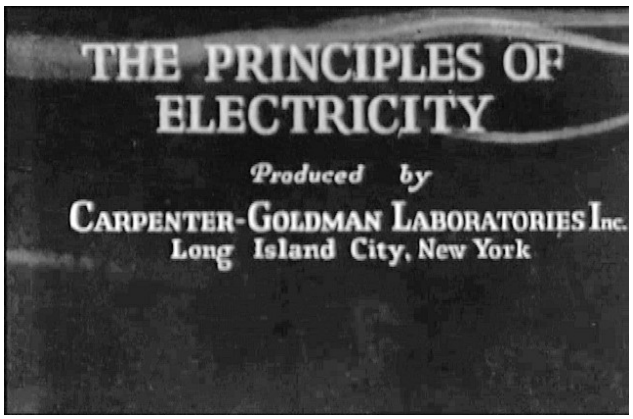
Coffman may have arranged the deal for *TOMMY'S TROUBLES*, an animation commissioned by Tennessee's State Dental Association. Carpenter-Goldman Labs animated on *SPEEDING UP OUR DEEP SEA CABLES* for producer Charles W. Barrell. In 1926 Carpenter-Goldman made *HOW THE FIRES OF THE BODY ARE FED* for the U.S. Public Health Service.

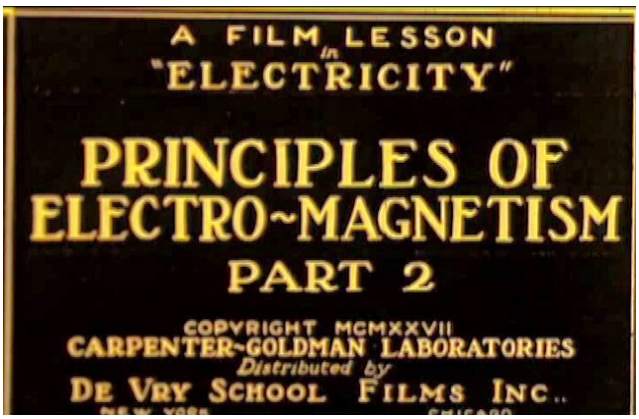
Carpenter Goldman Labs relocated to the Canadian-Pacific Building at 342 Madison Avenue, across the street from the Biltmore Hotel. Several companies involved with sound engineering operated offices in the Canadian Pacific. Sound grew into a specisl interest for Joe Coffman. Art Carpenter pursued his own avenues of interest, disenchanted with being tethered to the studio. Early in 1927 Carpenter sold his interest to George Lane, a machinist who made medical films. George Lane left Goldman and Coffman to do as they did.

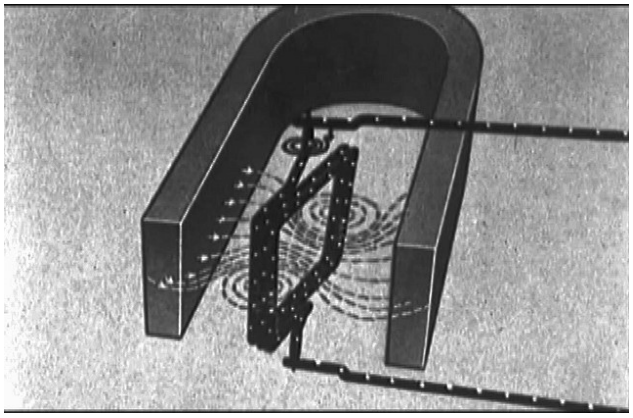
Being situated in Times Square was good for business. But Goldman wanted room to stretch his imagination beyond Manhattan's safety codes. Another move brought Carpenter-Goldman Labs to 161 Harris Avenue, Long Island City. Bell Labs, a division of

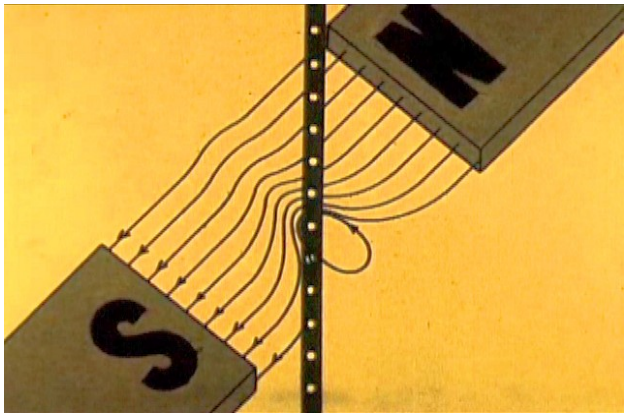
Western Electric, chose Carpenter-Goldman as their only outside consultants in the race to perfect sound on film.

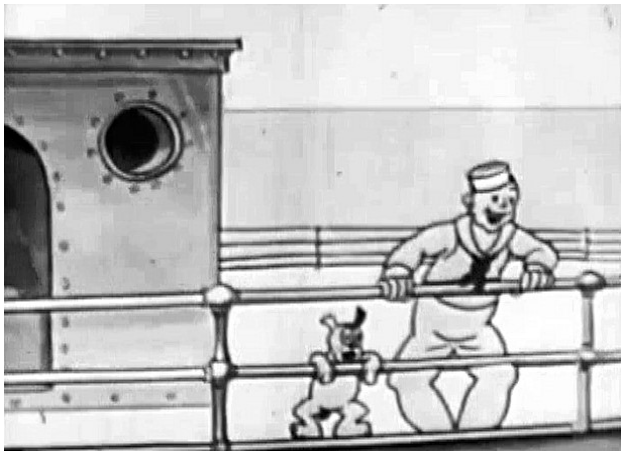
Max Fleischer had his fortunes intertwined with radio tech-whiz Lee De Forest's attempt to market a sound synchronization system. De Forest was friends with Herman DeVry, proprietor of a vocational training school in Chicago. DeVry and the U.S. Navy cooperated on films about electromagnetism. Carpenter-Goldman got the contracts to make them.



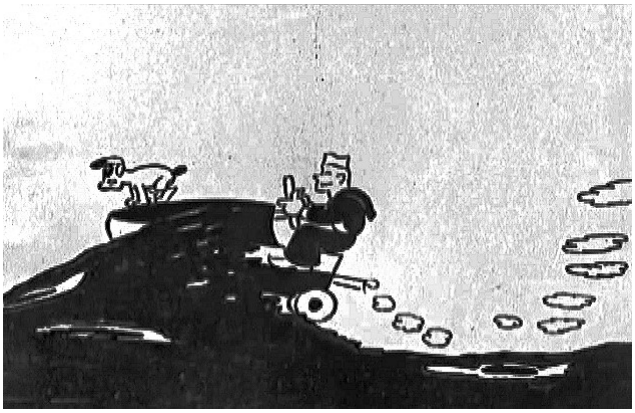






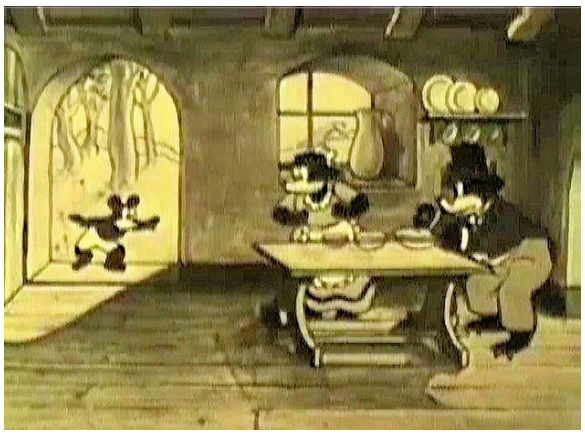


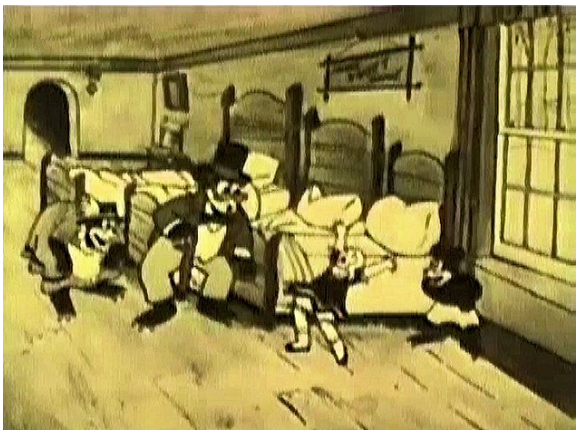
More Naval films were requested, of a whimsical nature. These were used to boost enlistment by showing how much fun Sailor Jack and his dog Gadget had travelling to exotic ports all around the world.

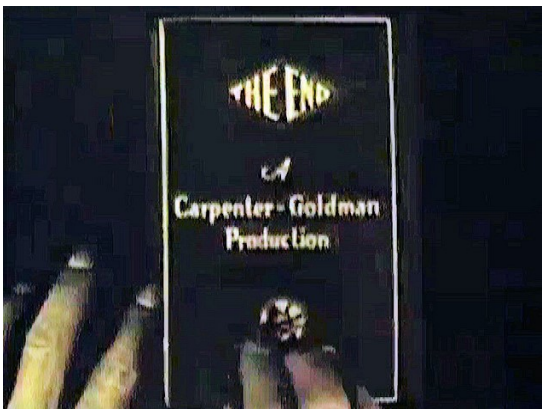


The American College of Surgeons hired Carpenter-Goldman to make a series of highly technical instructional films using the Kinemacolor process. Things were not going so well for Frank's friend Max Fleischer. Frank generously invited Max and his staff to work rent free at Harris Avenue until they were back on their feet.

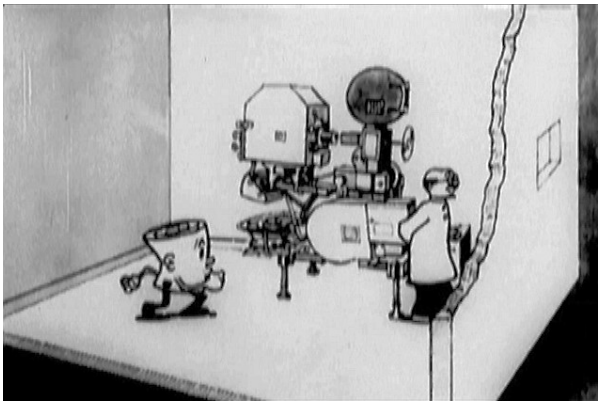
Max Fleischer's crew operated as Inkwell Films, pounding out silent Ko-Ko the Clown cartoons. The business was switching over to sound, but Carpenter-Goldman didn't have recording facilities. Joe Coffman worked closely with the people at Fox on a new "home" projector called the Spirograph. The August 1928 edition of *Movie Maker Magazine* has an article by K. R. Edwards of Kodak Teaching Films where Edwards explains that he had just animated *GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS* at Carpenter-Goldman for the 16mm home projector movie market.

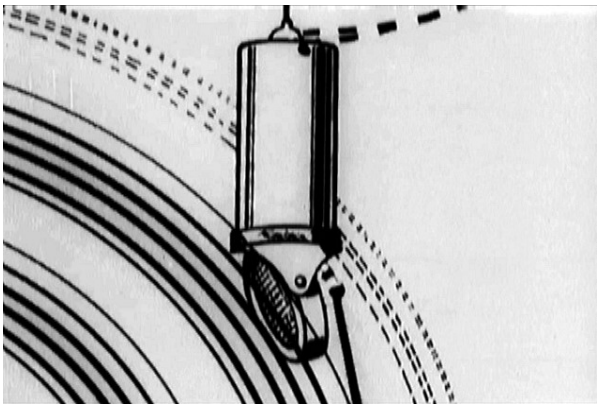


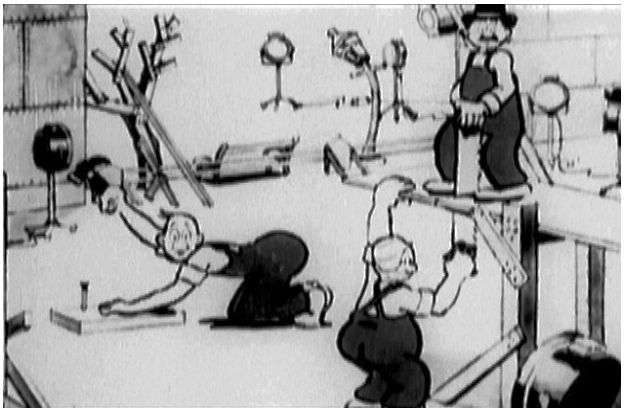




In 1929 Western Electric tapped Carpenter-Goldman to make a film to be played at the dedication of each theater upon installation of Western Electric sound-on-film equipment. Goldman brought Fleischer in on it. They came up with *FINDING HIS VOICE*. Coffman, put in charge of sound work on the project, referred to the experience as "drawing acoustical rabbits from the hat of science". This short cartoon is both entertaining and informative.



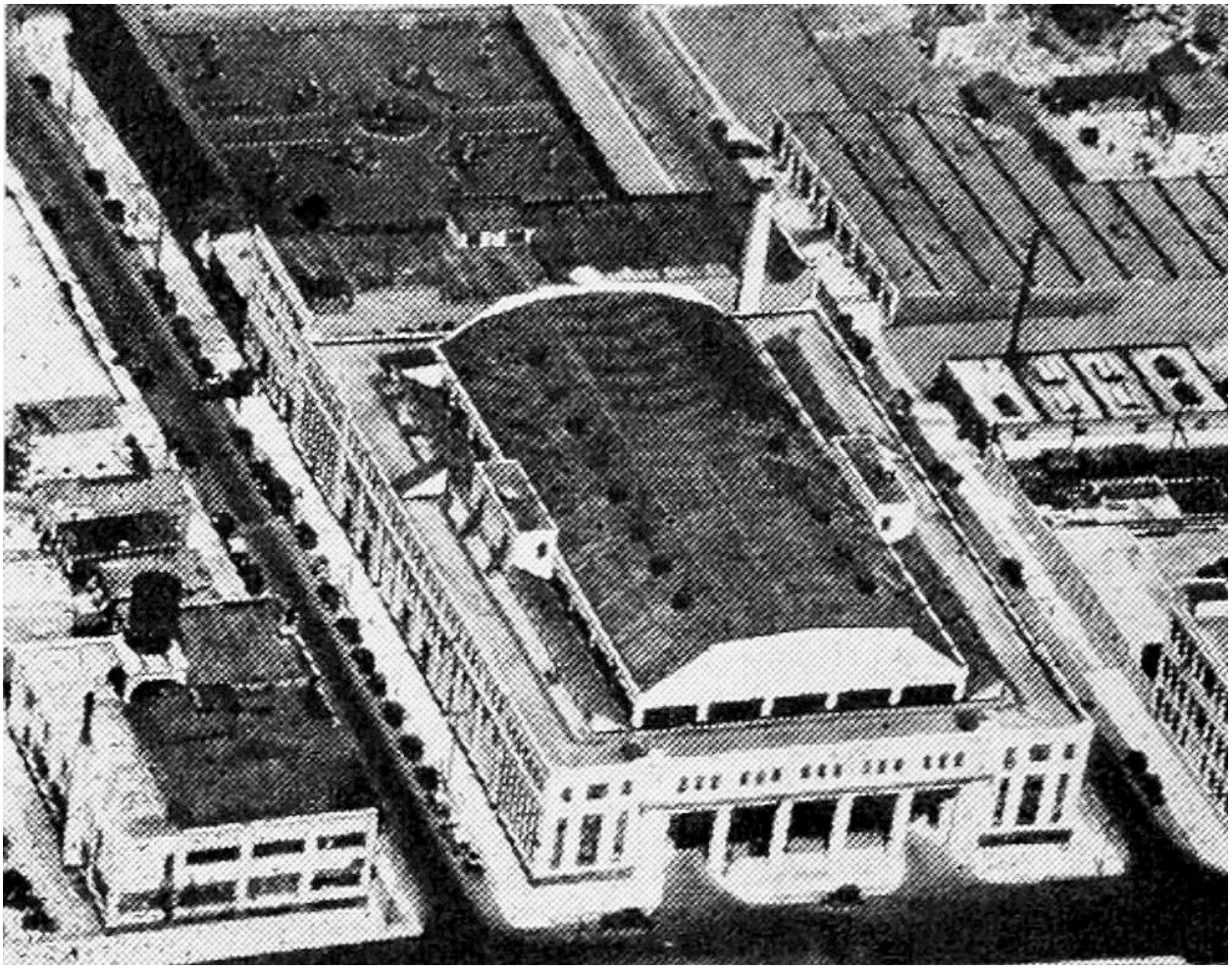




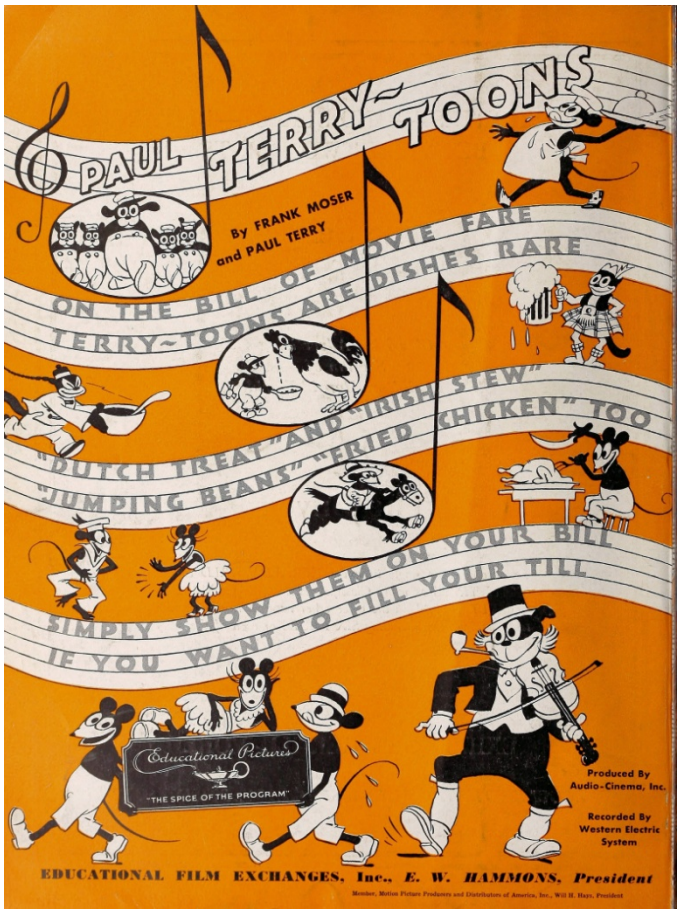
Thirteen years later it would be included in the Museum of Modern Art's film library *FINDING HIS VOICE* proved to be a turning point for both Fleischer and Goldman. Max left Harris Avenue to open his own studio in Times Square, making sound cartoons for Paramount Pictures. Frank was bound for the Bronx, because in September of 1929 Western Electric bought Carpenter-Goldman Labs and renamed it Audio-Cinema, Incorporated. The board of directors elected Joe Coffman president and general manager. Frank Goldman stayed on as secretary, treasurer, and production supervisor at their new headquarters: 2826 Decatur Avenue, the studio once owned by Thomas Edison.

There may have been some excitement about moving into so historic an edifice. Since rising in an open Bedford Park field during 1904, a bit north of Fordham Road, the Edison Studio had racked up considerable history. Interiors for *THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY* were shot there. Raoul Barré and Bill Nolan started their animation studio there. Willis O'Brien did early stop-motion there. Edison sold the property in 1918 and it changed hands several times, being enlarged and modified. It had been around for a quarter-of-a-century when Audio-Cinema moved in while a neighborhood grew around the building, requiring the whole place to be soundproofed.

But Western Electric had even grander designs, splurging on the old Paramount Pictures studio in Astoria, Queens at 35-11 35th Avenue. A recording engineer and an electrician, both trained at M-G-M, were hired to install Western Electric equipment. Between its two locations, Audio-Cinema was the largest East Coast studio.



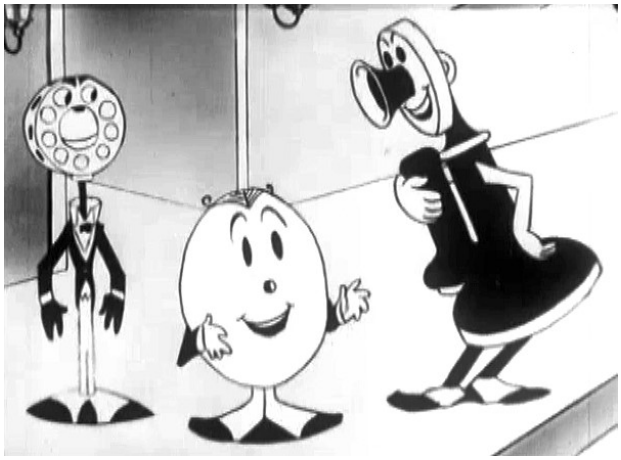
Audio-Cinema continued performing technical consultation for Bell Laboratories, extending such services to Universal Pictures, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Eastman Kodak, and Consolidated Film Industries, as well as distributing films for Mack Sennett and others. Philip Scheib, with a decade of experience as musical director for a major New York theater circuit, signed on as composer for the slate of movie shorts Audio-Cinema put into production. Paul Terry and Frank Moser, having broken off from Fables Studio, signed on to make a cartoon every two weeks.

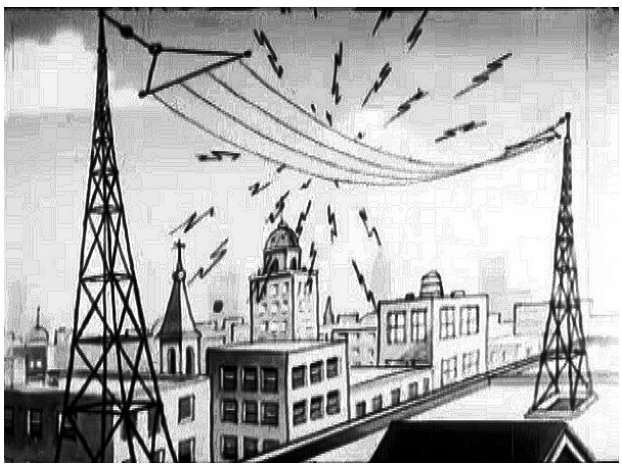
26
one-reel
PAUL TERRY-TOONS
by PAUL TERRY
and FRANK MOSER
In a few weeks, with a few releases, TERRY-TOONS established themselves among the most popular of screen novelties. No audience can fail to respond to that jazzy, lilting swing that Terry and Moser get into every one of these sound cartoons through their unique process. Millions have swayed to the rhythm and laughed at the fun of such gems as "CAVIAR," "HAWAIIAN PINEAPPLES," "SWISS CHEESE" and "BULLY BEEF." They are tuneful as well as funny—offering much of the world's best music as well as some of its best laughs—a dash of paprika for any program. And oh! how the children love them!
Recorded by Western Electric System
Produced by Audio-Cinema, Inc.
Educational Pictures
"THE SPICE OF THE PROGRAM"

PAUL TERRY-TOONS
By FRANK MOSER and PAUL TERRY
ON THE BILL OF MOVIE FARE
TERRY-TOONS ARE DISHES RARE
"DUTCH TREAT" AND "IRISH STEW"
"JUMPING BEANS" "FRIED CHICKEN" TOO
SIMPLY SHOW THEM ON YOUR BILL
IF YOU WANT TO FILL YOUR TILL
Educational Pictures
"THE SPICE OF THE PROGRAM"
Produced By Audio-Cinema, Inc.
Recorded By Western Electric System
EDUCATIONAL FILM EXCHANGES, Inc., E. W. HAMMONS, President

Trade publications followed Audio-Cinema's progress closely through 1930. Paul Terry's animators worked at the Bronx studio and soundtracks were done in Astoria. Paul Terry and Frank Moser were listed at Audio-Cinema as Production Supervisors alongside Frank Goldman, who was also Art Director. Cy Young (spelled Sy) held the title Miniature Department Chief. Cy Young worked on Terry-Toons as an animator. Joe Coffman produced the series.

Meanwhile, Frank Goldman proceeded with cartoons of his own, putting out four animated ads for Aetna Life Insurance. *HE AUTO KNOW BETTER* concerned liability insurance. *FATHER'S DAY AT HOME* was about accident insurance. *A DESERT DILEMMA* showed one should always have their Aetna card in case of a car crash. *THE FAMILY'S NIGHT OUT* advised having home insurance against loss from burglary.

Lillian Friedman started inking Terry-Toons right out of high school. Goldman put Terry and Moser to work on *A FAMILY ALBUM* as a sequel to *FINDING HIS VOICE.*





German engineer Herman Roessle teamed with Cy Young and Lillian Friedman on *MENDELSSOHN'S SPRING SONG*, done in Brewster Color. Audio-Cinema made theatrical ads as well, for which Terry and Moser provided animation under Goldman's supervision. Lillian Friedman worked with Theodore Geisel, Doctor Seuss himself, who designed character for a Flit insecticide ad. Warner Brothers Studio hired Audio-Cinema to do that one, possibly through Arthur Carpenter, who'd signed with Warner Brothers as a research assistant.

Frank Goldman continued to experiment with new technology through 1931. His latest patent application was for a combined printing and double exposure process meant to reduce animation costs. Goldman held another patent for a three-peg page registration on animation tables.

Bill Weiss, auditor and purchasing agent for Audio-Cinema, noted there were money problems at the company. Gorge Lane was put in charge as Joe Coffman shifted from President to Chief Sound Engineer. The Soviet Union engaged Joe Coffman as sound-film consultant for their state sponsored *Soyuzkino*. Then Audio-Cinema just blipped out of existence. Western Electric quickly installed their subsidiary Eastern Service Studios into the Astoria and Decatur Ave spaces, using some of the same personnel. Frank Goldman stuck around.

Joe Coffman went over to Consolidated Film Industries, the biggest film processing company in America, with six plants spread out around New York, New Jersey, Illinois, and California. Paul Terry and Frank Moser moved Terry-Toons to 203 West 140th Street, Consolidated Film's Harlem plant, taking Phillip Scheib and Bill Weiss with them. Terry and Moser dissolved their partnership with Joseph Coffman, reincorporating without the hyphen as Terrytoons.

Audio Productions appeared in September of 1933. The Astoria studio became their base of operations, with offices in Manhattan at 250 West 57th Street, where Western Electric housed a subsidiary named Electrical Research Products, Incorporated. ERPI, as everyone

called it, developed speakers for movie theaters. W. A. Bach, an ERPI trouble-shooter, was appointed as president of Audio Productions, which was actually a subsidiary of ERPI. Audio took over the Bronx and Astoria studios.

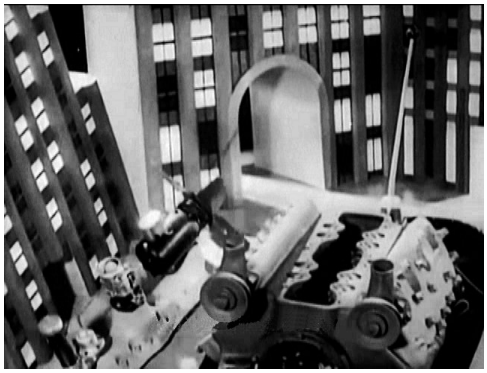
W. A. Bach was a go-getter who knew how to keep his name in the trade papers. This guy started out in Ontario, Canada with Universal Pictures' publicity department. He helped found an association there to protect movie distributors' rights against unscrupulous exhibitors. By 1917 Bach was running the New York publicity office for Universal. He was offered a sweet deal to organize Universal's network of service departments across the country. During 1918 W. A. Bach used that network to monitor the influenza epidemic as a public service. He took a job assisting in the sales office of W. W. Hodkinson before going over to Famous Players Lasky to manage the booking department. That company was just building a studio in Astoria, Queens. Bach stayed on for a while as Famous Players Lasky morphed into Paramount Pictures. Consolidated Film Industries retained Bach to manage sales throughout Europe. He performed the same duties for ERPI's Asian markets. Western Electric returned W. A. Bach to New York to oversee Audio Productions.

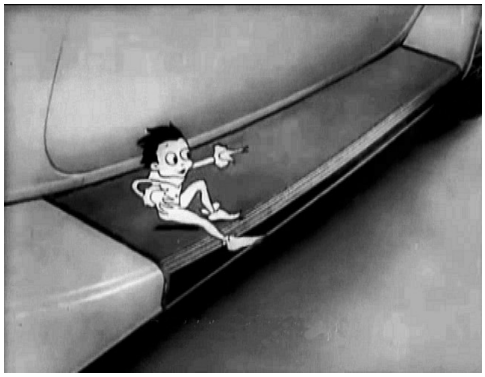
W. A. Bach

Amid this big shakeup Lillian Friedman went to Fleischer Studios, Cy Young headed for Disney, and Herman Roessle stood pat. H. L. Roberts Jr., with more than a decade of experience writing and directing industrial films, was made Animation Supervisor at Audio Productions. Frank Goldman became Director of the Theatrical Division. Frank Speidell, an ex-journalist trained as an editor and director, was Director of the Industrial Division. Joe Coffman earned a seat on the board of directors at Consolidated Film Industries. They sent him to Hollywood in preparation for becoming a division of Republic Pictures.

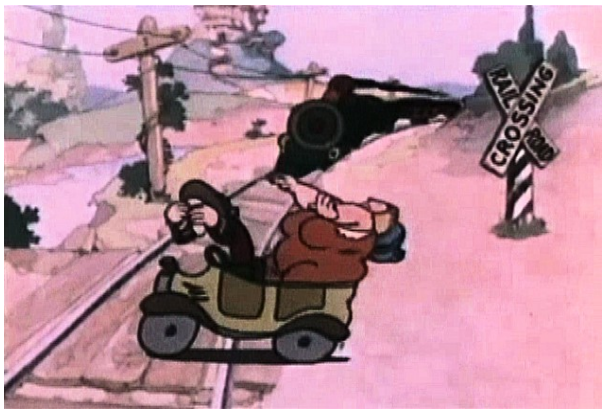
Corporations ruled the land. Frank Goldman now ran a division of a subsidiary of a subsidiary of a multi-national corporation. He'd been in the business fifteen years, helping to salvage the careers of both Max Fleischer and Paul Terry. We can thank Frank Goldman, at least in part, for Betty Boop and Mighty Mouse. His influence on industrial animation is no less impressive.

Goldman travelled to Dearborn, Michigan to make *RHAPSODY IN STEEL* for Ford Motors to show at the Chicago World's Fair. Stop-motion animation for the ten minute film was done at Audio Productions' studio. Goldman combined hand-drawn animation with the stop-motion process that had first attracted him to the business.





Audio Productions' new compose Edwin Ludig scored *RHAPSODY IN STEEL* brilliantly. 1934 was a big year. Goldman completed *ONCE UPON A TIME* for Metropolitan Life Insurance then went to Hollywood to supervise Technicolor photography of it. *ONCE UPON A TIME*, a fairytale about traffic safety, got picked up by public safety departments in several states and was widely screened in theaters, surrounded by much publicity and fancy lobby displays. Edwin Ludig's score was even printed as sheet music.



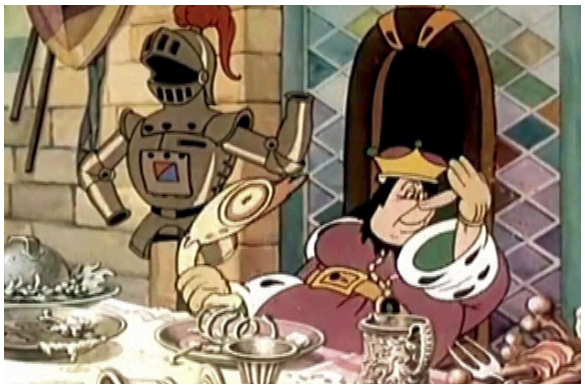
Brown & Louis Tobacco out of Kentucky had Audio Productions make an ad with a penguin for Kool cigarettes that was very well received. Audio Productions moved their headquarters from Deactur Ave to the Fox studios on 56th Street and 10th Avenue. ERPI soon moved into the Bronx space. 1935 brought about another Kool Penguin ad, now a recognizable product mascot.

The electrical energy consortium commissioned a Reddy Killowat commercial. A British tea company requisitioned *GULLIVER IN GREENFORD*. Goldman directed a film for Cadillac. The State of New Jersey ordered a series of Public Service Announcements. In November of 1935 Frank Goldman resigned to take a job in Detroit with the Jam Handy Organization.

Audio Productions promoted H. L. Roberts to Creative Director. W. A. Bach traveled to England in regards to marketing animated *MUSICAL MOODS*. Western Electric made Bach Managing Director of their London branch. Frank Speidell was named President of Audio Productions.

Goldman's considerable talent was put to good use in Detroit. He may have known Jamison Handy back when they were both with Bray Studios. The Jam Handy Organization had been around under another name then. Now it made a big push with General Motors as

a newly signed client. Goldman jumped in with a cartoon about Nicky Nome to be screened at General Motors conventions and limited theatrical release. Nicky Nome would star in several more colorful adventures over the next few years.



By 1940 Frank Goldman was in charge of Cartoon Animation at Jam Handy, with Rockwell Barnes running Technical Animation. Rocky Barnes had been in Chicago directing

animation with Waterson Rathacker before making military training films for the First World War. Barnes joined Jamison Handy's crew early as Art Director, and is credited with the slogan "The difficult can be done right away. The impossible takes a little longer."

Audio Productions carried on without Frank Goldman. In 1940 H. L. Roberts was gone too, acting as vice president of the Philadelphia-based De Frenes & Co's NYC division. Herman Roessle was Audio's Production Manager. They soon made Roessle a vice-president and he was with Audio Productions for the rest of his life. Frank Speidell held the presidency of both Audio Productions and Eastern Service Studios. It was a beehive.

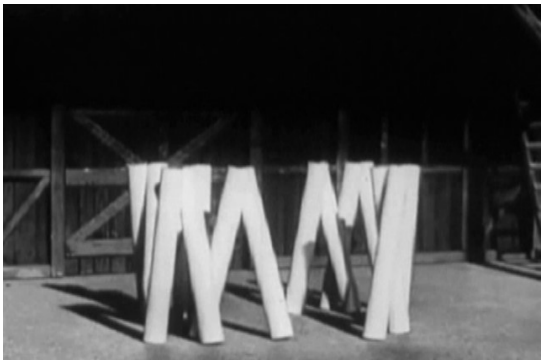
But the Jam Handy Organization proved busier yet. JHO earned more annually than any other studio. In 1941 Jam Handy made *DRAWING ACCOUNT* – about an industrial studio executive showing a salesman how animated films can boost sales by taking him through the process.

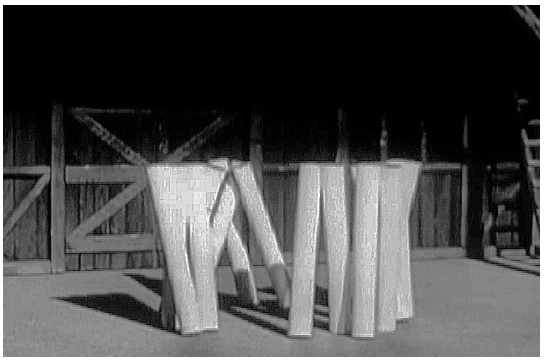
Max Fleischer arrived to work at JHO in 1942, fresh out of Miami. It seems whenever Max lost one of his studios, Frank Goldman was there to console him. Jamison Handy put his studio into training film mode as the Second World War pulled America in. Fleischer and Goldman contributed to some deeply classified projects.

Right before Western Electric sold the Astoria studio to the U.S. Army in 1942, for use as a Signal Corps animation shop, Frank Speidell gathered investors to buy Audio Productions. Speidell moved Audio Productions into the Film Center Building at 630 Ninth Avenue, where they would remain active for decades. Western Electric finished its ERPI research and sold 2628 Decatur Avenue as well. That Bronx studio passed through numerous hands.

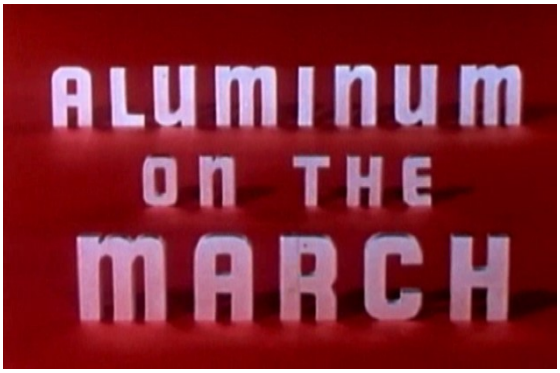
Occasionally someone proposed declaring it a landmark. A sizeable apartment building occupies the site today.

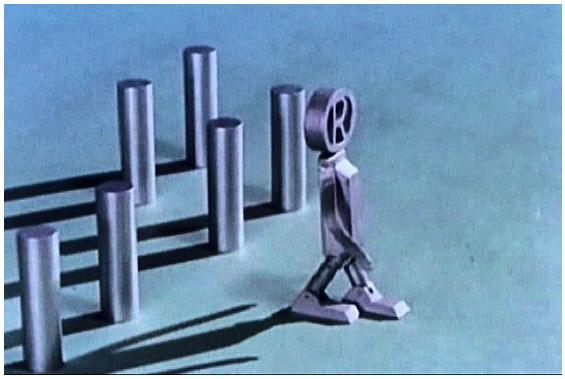
After the war Max Fleischer spent more-and-more time in New York. Frank Goldman was all in at Jam Handy, refining his stop-motion techniques. Goldman's signature piece came about in 1948 as square-dancing Lucky Strike cigarettes promenaded around a barn yard.

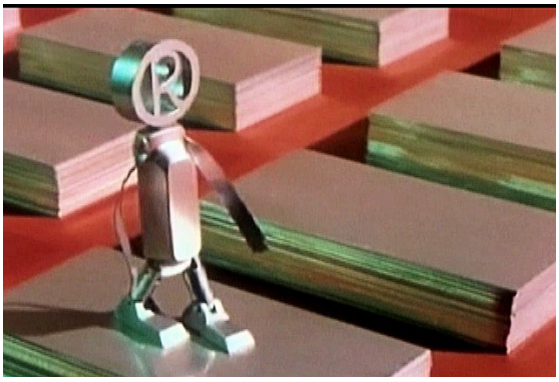


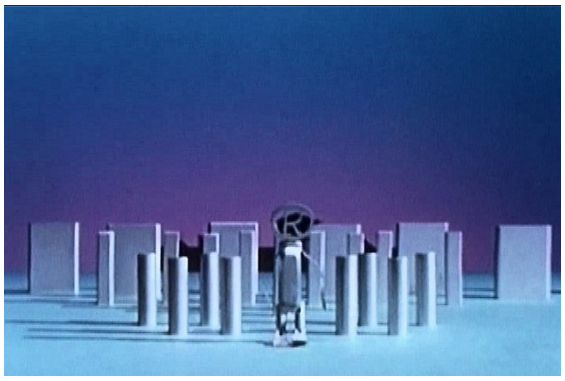


Frank Goldman would largely be remembered for his stop-motion in films such as 1956's *ALUMINUM ON PARADE*.









Francis Lyle Goldman came into the world nearly two years before the motion picture camera. When Goldman was twelve, the newly built Edison Studio fiddled with bits of stop-motion. Growing up in an exchange town, Goldman may have seen those films in some St. Louis nickelodeon, unaware that he would someday supervise animation at that Bronx facility. Goldman was eighteen years old when Winsor McCay's Little Nemo film paved the way for an industry. Goldman entered that industry at Bray Studios when he was twenty-five, remaining relevant for half a century. Around 1968 Frank Goldman retired from the Jam Handy Org.

Frank was ten years old when the Wright Brothers flew the first airplane. As he retired, human beings were about to set foot on the moon. Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY* ushered in the age of computers as part of animation. Frank Goldman's role in getting to that point is difficult to calculate. His work as an artist and inventor certainly helped pave the way. Frank Goldman passed away near Portland, Oregon on May 12, 1983.